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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/775,255	02/11/2004	Masahiro Takimoto	26CT-012-CON	9889
23400	7590	02/03/2006	EXAMINER	
POSZ LAW GROUP, PLC 12040 SOUTH LAKES DRIVE SUITE 101 RESTON, VA 20191			TO, TOAN C	
		ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER	3616
DATE MAILED: 02/03/2006				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/775,255	TAKIMOTO ET AL.
	Examiner Toan C. To	Art Unit 3616

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

#### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 06 June 2005.
- 2a) This action is FINAL.                  2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 19, 21-23, 26-32, 34, 35, 38 and 39 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 22, 26-31 and 35 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 19, 21, 23, 32, 34 and 38-39 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 11 February 2004 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacément drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All    b) Some \* c) None of:
  1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)                     |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)  | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____  |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>10/28/05; 11/15/05</u> . | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
|   | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                                    |

## DETAILED ACTION

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 19, 21, 23, 32, 34 and 38-39 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Iwanaga (U.S. 6,152,480) in view of Saslecov (U.S. 6,092,836)

Iwanaga discloses an airbag device for a vehicle, wherein the vehicle has a front end, a rear end, a passenger compartment and a panel located at the front of the passenger compartment, and wherein the airbag device comprises: a folded airbag (55); a case (53) that houses the airbag (55), the case being formed in a rectangular box shape (see figure 1), wherein the case has an opening (12) through which the airbag may protrude when inflated; and wherein the opening (12) opens in a rectangular shape (column 6, line 52) arranged in a longitudinal direction along a left-right direction; an airbag cover (21), wherein the airbag cover includes: a door (22), wherein the door (22) covers the opening (12) of the case (53), the door opening along an upper-lower direction, and a general portion (32), which is located around the door (22); a breakaway portion (27) arranged around the door (fragile portion 27 in figure 13), the breakaway portion being broken to open the door when the airbag is expanded; fasteners (56) for attaching the airbag cover (21) to the case (53), the fasteners (56)

being arranged on the upper and lower peripheries of the opening along the left-right direction, wherein the fastener (56) are constructed to permit the airbag cover to move slightly with respect to the case; and fixing members (29 and 31) that fix the airbag cover (21) to the panel (11); wherein the fixing members (29, 31) are located near an outer edge of the general portion (32), the fixing member (29, 31) being arranged on the left-right direction end side of the general portion (elements 29, and 31 in figure 3); wherein each of the fixing members (31) is hook-shaped, and each hook-shaped fixing member is fitted in a mounting hole (opening defined by the periphery 13) formed in the panel (11).

Iwanaga does not directly disclose the airbag for protecting the knee of occupant, and the panel is a knee-panel, which located approximately at the knee level of a passenger seated in the passenger compartment.

Saslecov shows the old and well known teaching of a knee protecting airbag assembly including an airbag (9'), and the cover (21, 22) is located below a knee-panel (16).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Iwanaga with the teaching of Saslecov to install the airbag device in a lower panel in order to protect the knees of the occupant.

#### ***Response to Arguments***

3. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

***Conclusion***

4. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Toan C. To whose telephone number is (571) 272-6677. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri (8:00-5:00).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paul Dickson can be reached on (571) 272-6669. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Art Unit: 3616

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

TTo  
January 4, 2006

  
PAUL N. DICKSON  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER  
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600